One Purpose

Faith *as a Direction*

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Preface

In a world that never sleeps, we have become experts at the "how" of living while losing sight of the "why." We are surrounded by more tools, more connectivity, and more "means" than any generation in history, yet the modern soul often feels a constant sense of being divided as if we are split into a dozen different pieces.

This book, *One Purpose*, was born from that very tension-the gap between doing much and feeling little.

For those who do not share the Islamic faith, this book is an invitation to look at the "tools" of your life; your career, your relationships, your ambition, and to ask if they have become your masters instead of your servants.

In the modern age, many of us suffer from "Silent Fatigue" —a deep-seated burnout that persists regardless of how much we rest. This exhaustion is not merely physical; it is the friction of a soul being pulled in a dozen different directions at once. It is the inevitable result of "fragmented goals," where each role you play demands a different version of you, leaving you feeling empty even in the wake of significant success. This book proposes that peace is found not in having fewer goals, but in aligning them toward a single, unchanging Horizon.

A Note on the Term "Tawhid - التوحيد" While the word *Tawhid* is a central pillar of Islamic theology that referring to the absolute Oneness of God, in the context of this book, it is presented as a functional medicine for the modern mind. It is the principle of "Internal Unity"—the practice of gathering one's scattered intentions and fragmented desires into a single, cohesive direction that brings wholeness to the human experience.

For my brothers and sisters in Islam, consider this a *Tazkirah* (تَذْكِرَة)—a reminder. We often speak of *Tawhid* as a theological pillar, but we sometimes forget to live it as a functional system. This is an exploration of how to turn the "secular" into the "sacred" through the alchemy of intention (*Niyyah* - نِيَّة). It is about moving beyond the struggle of "Religion vs. Life" and realizing that, with a unified purpose, every breath and every errand can be an act of proximity to the Divine.

The Path of Return Whether you are a professional in the West or a student in the East, the struggle is the same: our hearts cannot hold more than one center. When our goals are scattered, our peace is scattered.

In the pages that follow, we will not discuss how to do more, but how to be whole. By the end of this journey, my hope is that the map of your life becomes clear; where every secondary goal is merely a stepping stone, and every worldly means is a bridge leading to the only Destination that does not disappoint.

The road is more within reach than you think.
It does not require a new life; only a heart
that finally knows where it is going.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

In a time where life moves fast and roles multiply, humans work constantly…

We wake up early, rush through tasks, accumulate achievements, and then face a silent question:

To what end?

Introduction

This book does not try to add a new action to your life, nor does it call you to abandon the world, nor does it offer a perfect recipe for an extraordinary life. Instead, it asks a simple and deep question at the same time:

Can our actions be many, while our ultimate purpose remains one?

In modern culture, a person is measured by what they achieve, defined by what they do, and their value is reduced to their productivity. We were raised on goals: a career goal, a financial goal, a social goal, a health goal... But rarely do we ask about the greater purpose under which these goals align, or about the direction that gives meaning to all this movement.

The problem is not the number of actions, nor the variety of means, but rather the scattered purpose. Not every worldly deed is an act of worship, and success in achieving a goal does not guarantee reaching the highest purpose. Actions only become worship, success becomes meaningful, and staying on the path becomes salvation when they all align for one ultimate purpose: **For *Allah*** ﷻ.

This path is the essence of practical faith. It means that Allah is the highest objective—not only in prayer, but in work, earning a living, relationships, and small daily choices. It

means that Allah is the one unchanging purpose, while the means can vary without any issue.

In Islamic heritage, this idea was not presented as an abstract philosophical theory, but as a way of life. Books on self-purification (*Tazkiyah*-تزكية) and spiritual conduct (*Suluk*-سلوك) were not concerned with classifying actions as much as they were concerned with directing the intention. The question is not: *What are you doing?* But rather: *For whom are you doing it? And why?*

We must not forget that intentions and motives do not make an action right if it violates Islamic law (*Sharia*-الشريعة) and the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ. For this reason, scholars of spiritual conduct distinguished between the outward form of an action and its inner spirit. A deed may appear purely worldly, but it is elevated by its intention. On the other hand, a deed may look righteous on the outside, but it becomes empty of meaning if its purpose is corrupted. In this context, the ultimate purpose is not at the bottom of the list, but rather... **the axis that rearranges everything**.

When the purpose is unified, life is not canceled; it is organized. Desires are not eliminated; they are refined. Ambitions are not destroyed; they are reshaped.

This is a *message* **for** those who do a lot but do not feel satisfied. **For** those who work hard and

wonder if they are moving in the right direction. **For** those who want to be close to Allah without withdrawing from the world, or living in a constant conflict between "religion" and "life."

These pages do not offer a new definition of faith, nor a different explanation of worship. Instead, they try to reconnect the missing link between them; a link lost in this fast paced, materialistically driven era. It shows how a person can eat, sleep, work, love, and plan—and have all of it move in one single direction.

In the coming pages, you will find a discussion about intention—not as a mere phrase to be spoken. You will find a discussion about means—not as a mystical path or a personal choice, but as tools tested by their ultimate purpose. And you will find a discussion about sincerity (*Ikhlas*-اخلاص)—not as a rare, idealistic state, but as a daily practice that can be learned and reviewed.

The path is within reach, and unifying your purpose does not require a new life; it simply requires a heart that knows for whom it moves... **For Allah, the Almighty**.

Ultimately, you are not required to do less, nor to become a completely different version of yourself. Rather, you are meant to remain as you are... and direct everything within you toward the One and Only *God* ﷻ.

Chapter One

The Purpose That Does Not Multiply

It is not difficult to find a goal, but the difficulty is knowing *why* you want that goal. Many people think their problem is a lack of ambition, weak discipline, or lost opportunities. But when you look closely at their lives, you discover that the problem is deeper—**the unconscious multiplication of purposes:**

- A person works to earn money,
- then earns money to feel safe,
- then looks for safety to find peace,
- *but they never find peace.*

This is not because the means are wrong, but because the purpose was not clear or stable.

Unifying the purpose is not a philosophical idea, or just a general moral value. It is a lived reality and does not mean withdrawing from life. Instead, it means that every movement in life is directed toward Allah. And here lies the greatest misconception: When it is said that the purpose is for Allah, some assume this leaves no room for secondary pursuits like success, comfort, achievement, progress, and stability. In reality, Islam does not eliminate these aspirations; rather, it rearranges them to become helpful tools along the way.

Purpose, Objective, and Intention

While closely related, these concepts carry fundamentally different weights. To ensure absolute clarity, we must first establish our foundation:

- **Purpose (*Al-Ghayah*-الغاية):** The ultimate destination; the overarching direction in which all objectives and actions are aligned and ordered.
- **Objective (*Al-Maqsad*-المقصد):** The underlying benefit, wisdom, or higher meaning that the action serves.
- **Intention (*Al-Niyyah*-النية):** The internal direction that connects the action to its objective and ultimate purpose.

Your goal might be success in your job, and your intention might be to support your family, but the ultimate purpose—if it is upright—is for Allah.

The problem is not in having a material goal "secular pursuit", but in letting it become your ultimate purpose. When success is chased for its own sake, when money is desired for its own sake, and when social acceptance becomes the final purpose, internal exhaustion begins, even if everything seems to be working perfectly.

An Analogy: The Traveler's Path

Imagine a traveler heading toward a distant city, which represents their ultimate purpose. Along the way, the traveler stops to eat and rest. At this moment, their internal intention is to seek nourishment and relief from exhaustion, while the underlying objective of this act is to preserve their strength and health.

Even though the traveler has paused, this routine action does not disrupt the journey; because it remains aligned with the final destination, the simple act of resting becomes a vital part of fulfilling the overarching purpose.

This directly applies to the life of a person with a unified purpose. All actions serve as a supportive means to fulfill that ultimate purpose.

Why Can the Purpose Not Multiply?

Because the heart cannot hold more than one center. A person may be able to do many things, but they cannot fully direct themselves to more than one purpose at the same time.

When purposes multiply:

- One step pleases you, while another hurts you.
- Achievement makes you happy, while the fear of losing it scares you.
- You work hard, but you are never satisfied or content.

When the purpose is unified:

- Actions multiply without leaving you scattered.
- Success and failure differ in their impact, not in their direction.
- The path itself becomes meaningful, not just the result.

For this reason, scholars of spiritual purification (*Tazkiyah*-التزكية) focused on the intent more than the action.

They did not ask: *How much do you work?*

But rather: *For whom do you work?*

Allah as the Purpose and Human Life

"If I make Allah my purpose in everything"

Will I lose myself?

Will I become an idealist?

Will I be detached from reality?

The answer is exactly the opposite. When the purpose is for Allah:

- Desires are not canceled; they are controlled.
- Ambition is not eliminated; it is refined.
- Pleasure is not removed; it is purified.

<u>The problem is not in:</u>

Loving comfort, but in comfort becoming the ultimate purpose.

Seeking success, but in success defining your worth.

When the purpose is for Allah:

You work … *but you do not worship the work.*

You succeed … *but you do not bow to success.*

You fail … *without breaking down.*

These are goals and objectives. They multiply or get canceled, unlike the highest, unchanging purpose.

A Single Purpose is Not Tested by Words

Many people say, *"I work for Allah."* But the purpose is not known by slogans; it is known by choices!

- When conflicts arise.
- In times of loss.
- When results are delayed.
- In the absence of applause.

- Do you continue when no one sees you?
- Are you patient when you are not rewarded?
- Do you check your intention when your heart feels corrupted?

The heart's true purpose reveals itself:

- When the path gets difficult, and
- When there is no obvious gain except the countenance of Allah.

The Beginning of the Path:

One Honest Question

"If everything I build disappears,
what is the one thing I can never give
up without losing myself?"

If the answer is unifying your purpose for Allah, then you are on the path, even if you stumble. But if it is something else, then the problem is not with your life…

The problem is with its direction.

* * *

In the next chapter, we will break down the idea of neutral means, and how ordinary actions like work, money, and relationships turn into living worship, for one single purpose.

Chapter Two

Life as Worship Itself

Unifying one's purpose for Allah brings a foundational challenge:

Does everything I do have to be religious?

Will life turn into a series of heavy rituals?

> Beyond ritual acts in islam[1], worship is defined not by the nature of an action, but by its direction.
>
> A ritual act, like prayer, is corrupted if directed toward other than Allah. Conversely, a mundane routine, like work or sleep, is elevated into a rewarded devotion when aligned with the right intention toward Allah.

[1] These include the obligatory prayers, fasting, and Zakat, among other foundational duties.

The Means

Work, money, relationships, rest, planning, ambition—all of these are general means that are permissible (*Mubah*-مباح) in their origin.

Their value does not come from their appearance, but rather from:

- The purpose they serve.
- The way they are used.

Work, for example:

- Can be an act of worship.
- Can be an exhaustion of energy.
- Can become a new idol.

The difference is not in the job title, nor in the salary, but in the silent question behind it:

Why do I work?

Means Becoming Purposes

Treating means as sacred corrupts the soul.

- **Money**, pursued as an end, is never enough—no matter how much it grows.
- **Success**, made absolute, denies the heart peace—no matter what is achieved.
- **Validation**, taken as a purpose, imprisons the self in the minds of others.

Means are meant to serve; when idolized, they exhaust.

From Means to Worship

This does not happen by turning every action into a spoken remembrance of Allah (*Zikr*), nor by repeating a memorized intention (*Niyyah*) before every movement. Instead, it happens through three simple things:

- **Knowing the place of this action in your life:** Does it serve a greater purpose? Or does it consume you for its own sake?
- **Connecting it to a moral meaning:** For example, making work not just about profit, but about self-sufficiency and benefiting others.
- **Benefiting from it when it gives, and not minding if it stops:** Because you did not take it as a purpose in itself, but as a means.

Only then does the action itself become a path to the purpose, not a final goal.

Unity, Not Perfection

- You might lose your focus.
- You might work with mixed motives.
- You might feel sometimes that the world has pulled you in more than you wanted.

Unifying the purpose is not a fixed state; it is a constant return.

Ask yourself: *"Why am I doing this?"* so that you can correct your direction.

When you know the means for what they truly are:

- You will not hate work,
- You will understand ambition,
- And you will not fight life; instead, life will become a path to the purpose.

* * *

In the next chapter, we will break down the idea of neutral means, and how ordinary actions like work, money, and relationships turn into living worship, for one single purpose.

Chapter Three

Losing the Compass

How do other goals quietly creep in, stealing our direction without realizing it?

The problem is not ignorance. Many people know that their purpose is for Allah; they believe in it and agree with it theoretically. But over time, they live as if it does not exist.

> <u>How do we lose sight of our purpose when it is:</u>
>
> a clear concept,
>
> a repeated meaning, and
>
> a central principle in religion?
>
> **Because the purpose does not shift suddenly; it is replaced gradually.**

Silent Shifts

The shift happens quietly when:

Achievement becomes the source of your worth.

Social acceptance becomes the measure of your mental well-being.

The fear of failure becomes stronger than the desire for Allah's pleasure.

Busy, Yet Empty

When the purpose is lost:

- Constant exhaustion despite success.
- Anxiety despite stability.
- Extreme attachment to results.

* * *

Work does not give **meaning**,
Success does not give **tranquility**,
Appreciation does not give permanent **peace**.

These **feelings** are derived from the purpose, not the means.

The act is not wrong; The expectation is.

You seek what it cannot give.

The Achievement Cage

Perhaps, the purpose shifts toward a desire for distinction and **achievement**. You would constantly find yourself:

- In a race,
- In comparison,
- In an endless attempt to prove yourself.

Even worship itself can turn into an **achievement**:

- *How many times did I complete the Quran*[2]*?*
- *How many night prayers did I pray?*
- *How much did I memorize sunnah—without action?*

[2] This does not negate or diminish the virtue of seeking the rewards of recitation; it addresses the psychological shift toward quantitative pride.

Intention is Not Fixed...

and That is Normal

A common mistake is treating the intention as if it is something you set just once. Instead, it needs constant review.

The intention fluctuates, weakens, and gets distorted. For this reason, it must always be monitored, and you must be honest in bringing it back.

When Do We Review our Purpose?

We review it at specific moments:

- During a difficult choice.
- When you suddenly lose motivation (burnout) without an obvious reason.
- When losing something we love.
- During success and joy.

In these moments, the question comes:

"If no one saw this, would I still do it? And for what?"

"Is this success or loss causing me to drift from my purpose? Meaning, did it cause me to change my path?"

The Quiet Return

Staying firm on the path is not measured by the speed of your steps, but by the steadiness of your direction.

Returning to the ultimate purpose does not require a grand decision, nor an overhaul of your life. Rather, it simply requires:

- Correcting the intention behind your goals.
- Loosening your attachment to the means.
- Making a sincere attempt to return.

In the next and final chapter, we will look at the practical steps to protect this direction in our daily lives.

Chapter Four

Purpose in Practice

After the purpose becomes clear, the means are regulated, and the reasons for losing direction are known, the most important question remains:

How do we live all of this practically?

This needs to happen not only in moments of peace, but also under the pressure of work, the complexity of relationships, and the relentless fluctuations of the soul.

Unifying the Purpose is Not a Feeling...

It is a Way of Life

Unifying the purpose appears most clearly in choices, not in feelings.

A unified purpose:

- Organizes decisions,
- Eases loss,
- And prevents distraction, even when feelings fade.

The Three Anchors

Unifying the purpose is not just a theological term; it is a description of the heart's direction.

The First: Rearranging, Not Removing

Unifying the purpose does not mean:

- Abandoning ambition,
- Restraining desire,
- Or stopping life.

> Instead, it means that Allah is above everything, and nothing is equal to Him in the heart. You can love your work, but do not make it the source of your worth. You can have ambition, but do not make it the measure of your salvation.

The Second:
Self-Accountability (Gentle, Not Harsh)

"Did this action bring me closer to Allah or distance me from Him?"

Self-accountability should ideally be:

- Gentle,
- Honest,
- And realistic.

The goal is not to condemn yourself, but to reset your direction.

The Third:
Accepting Fluctuations Without Giving In

- The intention will weaken.
- Motives will get mixed.
- The world will sometimes take the lead.

> This does not mean failure. A person who has completely lost their purpose is not like someone whose purpose has merely weakened!
>
> Sincere return (*Tawbah*-التوبة) is one of the pillars of keeping the purpose unified.

The Single Direction

<u>When the purpose is unified:</u>

- Work becomes a purposeful pursuit (*Sa'ee-*سعي).
- Rest becomes a station ...
  not an escape.
- Relationships become a sacred bond ...
  not consumption.

Stop fracturing yourself between:

"I am here for the world" and

"I am there for religion."

Instead, live one single life, with one single direction.

The Invisible Metric

The true direction of your heart is revealed in the dark. To test the integrity of your direction, confront these three quiet tests:

If this action remains entirely invisible to the world, would I still do it?

If it yields no immediate reward or recognition, would I still continue?

If its ultimate impact is delayed indefinitely, would I still endure?

> The answers expose the exact alignment between your means, your immediate goals, and your ultimate purpose. Do not search for a curated, flawless answer; simply answer with honesty.

Direction as Destination

Unity of purpose is not a station you stop at, but a direction you head toward. You might walk slowly, and you might stumble, but as long as the destination remains clear, you are on the path—and you are never lost.

Beyond the Page

Tomorrow, your intention will weaken. Next month, your motives will blur. In time, the very words on these pages may fade into the relentless noise of your daily life.

Expect this drift. The purpose was never to achieve a frozen, unshakeable state of perfection. It was to master the honesty of returning.

The Mastery of the Return

Success along this path demands no flawless immobility; it is simply the mastery of the return. It is the capacity to detect your drift, pause within the noise, and realign the heart.

A shifting intention, a sudden void of motivation, or an obsession with the means are merely signs of human weakness—never verdicts of failure. They are checkpoints for alignment. True firmness is not the absence of a fall, but the power of *sincere return* that converts every stumble into a sturdier foundation.

De-sacralize the means. Life is not a fragmented sequence of tasks, but a singular, unbroken current flowing toward the One.

Live fully—not by multiplying the friction, but by unifying the direction.

Work, love, build, fail, and rise again, while knowing—at the deepest part of yourself—for Whom the entire cosmos moves.

Collapse the divide between the sacred and the mundane; let your sleep be devotion, your labor be proximity, and your silence be contemplation. The metric is never the volume of the deed, but the absolute reality of the One you seek.

Should you find yourself one day exhausted without a cause, victorious without fulfillment, or consumed by a meaningless rush. Turn back with all your heart.

Direct everything within you outward. Not with a frantic new action, but with a stillness that perceives nothing on the path except the Destination, and demands nothing from the journey except... ***Allah***, the Almighty.

* * *

One Purpose

Faith *as a Direction*

We have become experts at the "how" of living while losing sight of the "why". Surrounded by endless tools and connectivity, the modern soul remains quietly divided, suffering from a deep-seated burnout that persists no matter how much we rest.

This book is not a call to abandon the world, nor does it demand an overhaul of your daily existence. It is a functional guide to internal unity—showing how ordinary routines like labor, rest, and relationships can be aligned toward a single, unchanging Horizon.

Your heart can only have one true center. Stop tearing yourself apart.

Live one single life, moving in one single direction.

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